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1988/03/17

RELEASED IN PART B1,A5 A3



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

March 17, 1988

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MEMORANDUM

TO: P - Mr. Armacost
FROM: EAP - Gaston Sigur
SUBJECT: Your 3/17 6:30 p.m. Meeting With PRC Charge Qian

Charge Qian Yongnian has requested a meeting with you to respond further concerning the Chinese IRBM systems in Saudi Arabia. The PRC Embassy has not indicated precisely what Qian will say, [REDACTED]

B1,A3,A5

We recommend that you first hear Qian out, then express our concern over the global spread of missile delivery systems, stressing the urgent need for a dialogue between the US and the Chinese on controlling missile technologies. Then you would turn to the immediate problem of the breaking story and what we need in the way of assurances on the Saudi installations themselves, referring to the need for a convincing verification regime. The specifics of what you say will of course depend on what Qian has already told you. Attached are suggested talking points and a list of questions from which you may wish to draw.

Attachments:

- 1) Suggested Talking Points
- 2) List of Contingency Questions

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United States Department of State
Office of FOI, Privacy, & Classification Review
Review Authority: AINSWORTH, THOMAS
Date: 11/23/94
Case ID: 9103700

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Suggested Talking Points

- Appreciate your quick response flowing out of Foreign Minister Wu's cordial visit of a week ago.
- The USG is deeply concerned over the danger to international stability inherent in the spread of missile delivery systems. A number of countries are on the threshold of developing the capability to utilize the technology of ballistic missile systems able to deliver nuclear or chemical weapons.
- Transfer of IRBM systems is particularly counterproductive to international arms control efforts at a time when the US and USSR -- in a move supported by your government -- have agreed to dismantle IRBM's on a global basis.
- We have raised with you our desire to control transfer of missile technologies. This most recent development heightens the urgency for a more effective dialogue between our two countries on this question. Such a dialogue would minimize any possibility of misunderstandings counterproductive to our common interest in developing and expanding mutually beneficial cooperation.
- Even more immediately, telephone calls from US media lead us to expect the news of the Saudi installations will appear in tomorrow's papers. We have a mutual interest in responding to immediate and subsequent press queries in a manner providing the best reassurances we can make. In this connection we would

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] appreciate a rapid response on this point. (More detailed questions may be drawn from the following list.)

We would

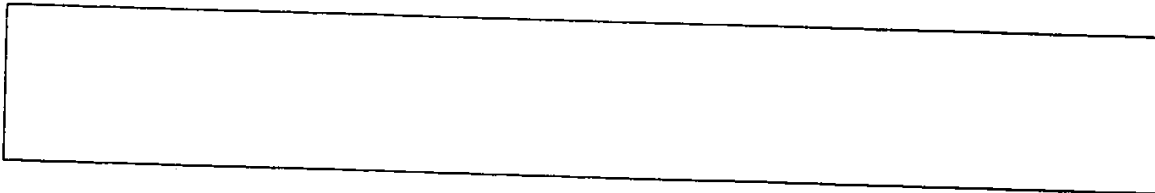
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Questions Regarding Chinese Missile in Saudi Arabia

1. What is the system which has been sold to Saudi Arabia?
2. What is its range? When was it tested to that range?
3. What is its warhead (weight of the high explosive and the weight of the overall payload including the reentry vehicle)?
4. What is its accuracy (in terms of meters, circular error probability or CEP)?
5. Has the system ever been designed or tested with a chemical warhead? How easily can the conventional warhead be replaced by a nuclear warhead?
6. How many launchers and missiles has China agreed to sell to the Saudis?



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Drafted:EAP/CM:JRDonovan
0271I 7-6803 03/17/88
Clearance:EAP/CM:JBadger
EAP:RWilliams
NEA:PBurleigh
PM:

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